

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

WINNING THE TRANSFORMATION WAR UGLY

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ABSTRACT

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Over the past six years America's Army has undergone one of the most aggressive and impressive periods in its history. At the forefront has been its performance in the Global War on Terrorism. Equally successful, and almost as much maligned, have been the simultaneous modernization for the aging equipment fleet, transformation to modular configurations, and continued progress toward research and development of the Objective Force and its Future Combat System (FCS).

Clearly, the Army needs a process for monitoring the status and preparedness for each of its modular Brigade Combat Teams (BCT's) in order to maximize their ability to contribute to the National Military Strategy (NMS); however, transformation to modularity is not the end state. It is just an azimuth check on the path to the Objective Force.

Some systems suffer in the short term but the process is far from broken. In spite of accusations that the Army is still operating with a Cold War mentality, the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) is not giving credit for the unparalleled progress that has been made to date, nor is it providing the strategic vision for a force other than the Current Force, Interim Force or Objective Force.

WINNING THE TRANSFORMATION WAR UGLY

Introduction

Very seldom has America's Army not been undergoing some form of Transformation. Generally, we look at change as a normal cost of doing business and view it as an evolutionary process. Perhaps the difference today is the scope of the Transformation coupled with the environment in which it is taking place; leading critics to believe that it is revolutionary and perhaps unaffordable.

Debates over the size of the Army did not start during then Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) General (GEN) Eric K. Shinseki's unveiling of Transformation, nor did it begin in 1997 with GEN Reimer's Strike Force concept. It began at the end of the Cold War with an ambiguous requirement defined in our National Military Strategy (NMS). Military capabilities require clarity of purpose in order to be tailored to meet America's needs. The bottom line question raised in some circles was whether the United States needed to be able to win in two Major Theaters of War (MTW's) simultaneously. During the Cold War, the answer would have been yes, but shortly thereafter, it was far less clear. The answer to this question sets the stage for theater strategic and operational planning in the Combatant Commands (COCOMs), as well as budgeting, manning, equipping, and modernization strategies in the Pentagon.

A National Security Strategy, from which a (National) Military Strategy is theoretically derived, should serve two functions. First, it should articulate policy. The strategy signals to possible adversaries that we are focused on the challenges they pose. Second, it provides guidance to the numerous government agencies with National Security roles.¹

Since there seems to be so much debate on what is wrong with Transformation, the question needs to be: *"How should the Army transform to meet both the current and future needs of the Nation?"*

It is important that today's mid grade officers understand the complexities associated with Transformation. They will live with the results of today's efforts, must be able to articulate what the Army is striving for, and will have to generate visions for the next Transformation. America must have these leaders in order to remain relevant in the future and avoid the mistakes of past Transformations. These leaders must understand that the Army has been as successful at Transformation as it has been in combat.

Why Transform

Today, America's Army faces many challenges and will continue to face more in the future. The globalization of the world economy, population explosion, rate of technology

development, and increasing gap between the wealthy and destitute will ensure that human conflict will remain a part of life. The actors may be nation states or terrorists. Our leaders need to comprehend many vague principles in order to develop the future forces required to defend our way of life. To understand Transformation, we need to have working foundations in the following areas: proper definition of the Nation's needs in a Vulnerable, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous (VUCA) environment; the Government Accounting Agency's (GAO) limited understanding of where the Army is heading with Transformation; policies on readiness reporting; the level of internal guidance; the prioritization and demand for fiscal resources; and technology and structure maturation.

With a state of flux existing after the Cold War and Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the Clinton Administration attempted to base force structure and capability guidance on then Secretary of Defense Les Aspin's Bottom Up Review (BUR) of the Armed Forces. The slight change in intent from being able to "win 2 MTW's simultaneously" to "maintain sufficient military power to be able to win two Major Regional Conflicts (MRC) that occur nearly simultaneously,"² left wide latitude for interpretation. From there we declined as far as the "win-hold-win" strategy, asserting that our Armed Forces could move from a first conflict to reinforce a second later, without much regard to what it would take to move that "legacy" force, as well as revitalize its personnel. An argument can be made that we probably never had the capability to win 2 MTW's simultaneously, but at least that strategy provided a method to communicate with Congress and the civilian masters that was clearly articulated. Each successive reduction to the strategy with a focus on force cuts increased strategic risk to the nation without requiring public acknowledgement.

Dr. Jack Kem puts forth that ends (purpose), ways (methods), and means (resources) must be considered when managing change, and that change may come in the form of Transformation, Reengineering, or Downsizing (or Rightsizing). Transformation (the most comprehensive approach) includes ends, ways, and means to change. He offers that Reorganization only considers ways and means without a definable endstate. Finally, Downsizing zeroes in on means only. "The approaches, which deal with ends (purpose or product), ways (methods), or means (technology and resources), include transforming the organization's purpose (focusing on ends), reengineering its methods (focusing on ways), or downsizing its technologies resources (focusing on means)."³ The change in numbers and types of scenarios played out in Illustrative Planning Scenarios (IPS) seems to have been a way to disguise Downsizing with Transformation.

Past Army generations had the luxury of focusing on one of the following domains: Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership, and Education, Personnel and Facilities (DOTMLPF). Each domain had an Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) that staffed and managed change Army wide. This point manifests itself if you consider Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The Army had the great materiel (M1A1 Tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles (BFV's), Apache Helicopters) that General Meyer oversaw during his tenure as Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA). America's Army also benefited from the doctrine (both training and war fighting) that General Vouono developed and implemented during his time as the Chief. Additionally, we benefited from General Wickam's educational systems and leadership development philosophy.

Another way to help manage transformation was through the old Department of the Army Master Priority List (DAMPL) process, which resourced units (minus training dollars) based on a "first to fight" order. Forward deployed and contingency forces were fairly well resourced while non-contingency CONUS forces was where we accepted risk. Operating Tempo (OPTEMPO) funds were not prioritized because the Army leadership understood that the rotation of Soldiers generated a need for some common collective training baselines.

In other words we had the capacity and higher level staff manning and vision to fully develop and coordinate change in an orderly manner, and then resource forward deployed, contingency and even experimental units accordingly.

The years 2006 and 2007 represent the first time in recent history that senior leadership has been successful in making the case that America's Army is in need of help in terms of both end strength and budget. Current Army Chief of Staff GEN Peter Schoomaker has been the orator of the drum beat. "The U.S. Army will break unless it gets thousands more combat troops and is able to make greater use of reserve forces. The sustained strategic demand of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan has been placing a near-intolerable strain on the Army."⁴ The message resonated on many fronts. Readiness reports were dropping based on the frequency of unit rotations to combat zones and the Army did not submit its 2006 Program Objective Memorandum (POM) to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) because it could not match its Title 10, National Security Strategy (NSS), NMS and Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) missions to its Fiscal and Supplemental resources.

The end state and budget stakes rise considerably when oversight agencies, like the GAO pose their best accounting advice to an agenda-based constituency. Most of what they see is black and white, and steers the uninformed to a banal point of view, which then requires more staff work to communicate a more complete picture to the Congress. Regardless of today's

technologies that can and will carry over, developed and tested in combat, the best that the GAO can offer is that:

... the Army faces significant challenges in executing its modularity plans to fully achieve planned capabilities within the time frames it established. In short, because of uncertainties in cost, equipment, and personnel plans and the absence of a comprehensive approach for assessing modularity results, we do not believe decision makers have sufficient information to assess the capabilities, costs, and risks posed by the transformation to a modular force.⁵

While most would argue that the Army has moved down a very difficult transformation path, many would agree that modularity is probably the least expensive part of Transformation. Modularity is little more than reorganizing the assigned forces from one Modified Table of Equipment (MTOE) to another. The Army's experiences with modularity over the past three to five years have been difficult, but pose only moderate risk to our deployed formations. There are shortages of personnel in high demand low density Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) for a variety of reasons ranging from newly minted skills like JNN hub operators, to developing proper life cycle manning systems. In each of the Army's heavy divisions that have deployed to Iraq in modular configurations, there have been challenges, but no known showstoppers. The Third Infantry Division, Fourth Infantry Division, and now the First Cavalry Division have all had to do more with less during their inter-deployment cycle. They have been forced to hot seat off of training sets of equipment, change Cold War levels of unit proficiency to fit today's combat environment, accept grade structure reductions for some critical and non-critical positions, and even deploy with less than 100 percent unit manning. To their credit, each division met their training goals for deployment. Leaders found creative solutions that were less than desirable to their units, like First Cavalry Division falling in on Fourth Infantry Division's Iraq combat vehicles, but these units still deployed on time in modular configurations.

GAO's concern appears to be more directed at capturing the plans for the Objective Force Structure, and looks to be able to "distinguish between costs associated with modularity and the costs associated with modernizing equipment or restoring equipment used during ongoing operations."⁶ Restoring today's equipment is not cheap but is necessary for today's fight, as well as maintaining some capability once the Future Combat System (FCS) platforms begin to be fielded. The GAO statement is short sighted in two critical areas. First, there are systems today that will carry over into the Objective Force; and second, the Army will be hard pressed to instantaneously convert all platforms to FCS.

Another criticism that GAO levels against Army Transformation is that "... the Army lacks a comprehensive and transparent approach to effectively measure progress against stated

modularity objectives, assess the need for further changes to its modular unit designs, and monitor implementation dates.”⁷ This would be an issue if there were strategic top fed guidance on a clear National Security Strategy; and if units were not making deployment timelines with newly fielded equipment in today’s Global War on Terrorism. One of the Army’s tried and true processes is “two levels down.” We train for proficiency two levels below our own, so in essence, Platoons (and leaders) are trained by Battalions (and commanders); Battalions (and commanders) are trained by Divisions (and commanders); and Divisions by Major Army Commands (MACOMS). The same principle logic carries over in readiness reporting, and it should carry over to Modularity conversion. If the Congress wants an update, it should theoretically be looking for a strategic level of detail from the Service, Combatant Commander (COCOM, or Major Command Commander (MACOM), and not tactical levels from subordinate units below the COCOM or MACOM.

Dr. David Chu, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, tried on numerous occasions to refine all service readiness reporting systems since he was sworn into office in June 2001. The challenge he faced was that no two units looked alike, and the services were concerned that their subordinate units below the two star command level were not necessarily interoperable based on resourcing. In October of 2001 while I worked readiness for the Pacific Command, Dr. Chu personally hosted Joint Monthly Readiness Review (JMMR) action officers from the COCOMs and MACOMs to address this concern.

Modularity helps eliminate this challenge as well as lets senior leaders and decision makers see which plug and play units are ready for specific types of missions. Although many are still uncomfortable with Brigade Combat Teams being “selected” by decision makers with access to readiness information, the situation is better today because of that visibility, so GAO’s concern about progress reporting does not lend any credibility to the service readiness reporting systems.

Another counter point to the GAO finding on reporting is the level of detail that units like the First Cavalry Division developed during the conversion to Modularity. Its then commander, MG Peter W. Chiarelli, directed that the staff build a campaign plan from Transformation to Modularity, much like its Baghdad campaign plan. The Lines of Operation (LOO) for Modularity became manning, equipping, training, stationing (based on the addition of a fourth maneuver brigade at Fort Bliss, Texas), and preserving the division. The approach of America’s First Team was probably not much different from any other division managing similar change. It demonstrates that lower level leaders understand intent and will come up with solutions to complex challenges. The Commanding General’s guidance to his staff at a Transformation In

Progress Review (TIPR) in September 2005 accounted for the challenges facing his higher level commanders and the difficulty of transforming on the move while in contact; with contingencies like Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, as well as Pakistan disaster relief; and being in between Unit Status Report (USR) regulations and the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) concept. The end result was a Strategic Readiness System (SRS) glide path that bridged the USR – ARFORGEN gap, while providing detailed metrics in each LOO to enable predictive analysis on readiness for various levels of missions.

Perhaps the positive effect of the GAO study is that even though it preceded the HASC and Secretary Gates' troop increase initiatives, it served to show that the Army needs a larger end strength to meet its missions.

The Army's pre- and post-Objective Force mission requirements are difficult to predict. The NSS and NMS are vague enough to capture the realities of today's Vulnerable, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous environment. The art of the Army Campaign Plan is that it is moving forward without definitive guidance on what "the nation's wars" are to win. In many respects this is a leadership challenge that has emerged over the past decade where senior Army leaders were forced to walk a fine political line in order to defend and preserve the service, without realizing the longer term effects of trying to do "more with less." Since the strategic vision of what we had to be prepared to fight was uncertain, less mass with more quality looked like a viable course.

An example of the more quality with less mass conviction occurred during the summer of 2001, when former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff GEN Henry H. Shelton noted "the need to make sure that we are never surprised again,"⁸ when reflecting on times when U.S. Forces weren't prepared for combat at the Kasserine Pass in North Africa during World War II and Task Force Smith during the Korean War. He was attempting to communicate that even though the Army was smaller than during the Gulf War, it was better than it was during the Gulf War. He went on to support the Army's efforts by saying "Military transformation is a complex endeavor, where leaders must not only prepare for today's threats, but also for those foreseen in 15 to 20 years."⁹ The art is to identify the missions of the future, examine and evaluate today's capabilities to meet them, and then set the resourcing azimuth to achieve those future missions. GEN Shelton's thoughts seem to support the need to be prepared for the future while suggesting that downsizing is transformation compared to a past mission.

Transformation for the sake of Transformation should never be an option either. A generation of senior leaders "supported" transformation publicly without matching it to potential emerging missions, and believing in the long run that the Army was already able to do more with

less. Had it not been for GEN Shinseki, it is possible that we would not be on a path toward Transformation, but only Modernization. Douglas A. Magregor's book, *Breaking the Phalanx*, provided the framework for those who accepted the status quo by stating that,

... changing the organizational structure and strategic focus of the U.S. Armed Forces will require not only pressure and influence from above and outside the services, but also anticipation of how prior experiences and cultural norms of the rank-and-file professional military resistant to change will lead them to slow otherwise misdirected change.¹⁰

Some of the senior Army and Congressional leaders who read Magregor's book realized that change was coming, but did not necessarily understand how to provide the vision and force structure guidance necessary to shape the Army for future conflicts. Removing three star commands became the mantra for leaders realizing the need for change, without anticipating what to change. Considering the uncertainty of what the future would look like, Transformation became the reason for maintaining the Army. *Breaking the Phalanx* was not the only source attempting to manage change within the Department of Defense. Any change to an organization charted with "winning the Nation's Wars" would be complex and generate differences of opinion with unparalleled magnitude.

Imperatives and Challenges to Continued Transformation

Today's transformation is neither something that came out of the blue nor caught our Army off guard. General Shinseki inculcated the Army with his vision when he announced that the Third Brigade Combat Team of the Second Infantry Division (3/2 ID) would become the Interim Brigade Combat Team (IBCT). During the 1999 Association of the United States Army (AUSA) convention in Washington D.C., GEN Shinseki made the case that America needed to develop a capability that was rapidly deployable, survivable, lethal, and sustainable. This force was to be more than experimental, but less than the objective force. Responding to a question after his now famous transformation announcement, GEN Shinseki said,

What we're looking at right now is what will best meet this interim requirement that will allow us to put together a brigade-sized, maybe two brigade-sized, packages, and then use it as a way of defining what the follow-on operational and organizational adjustments should be. But we intend to stand it up, organize it, equip it, train it, pick it up and lift it and use it, as opposed to study it.

As to where we intend to deploy to, good question. But it's our ability to provide a reaction capability right now that we lack with just our pure heavy and our pure light forces.¹¹

At the time, most realized that America's Army had the best light, as well as the best heavy force capabilities in the world. We needed to develop a medium weight capability that

bridged the gap between the two because we felt that our adversaries had “gone to school” on Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, and would not allow us to build up in time to react to future conflicts. GEN Shinseki used his experience as a four star commander in Europe, as well as his experience as GEN Reimer’s Vice Chief of Staff of the Army (VCSA), to articulate the need for a capability that could deploy faster than heavy forces with more staying power than light forces. His commitment only grew stronger after September 11, 2001. In an interview, he stated “the only map he has permanently placed in his office since moving in … depicts the landmass surrounding the Caspian Sea – including Afghanistan – in Central Asia. Because of the remoteness and poor lines of communication in the area, Shinseki said it reminded him on a daily basis of the importance of Transformation.”¹² Early on, both the heavy and light communities would pay a portion of the bill to create the medium weight capability.

The IBCT would become the Medium Weight Brigade Combat Team (MBCT) and eventually the Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT). As early as 1996, GEN Reimer had chartered the United States Army’s Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) at Fort Monroe, Virginia, to work on the “Strike Force” concept. The IBCT was the “hands on” study.

What can not be lost in the history of the SBCT is how it expedited Doctrinal, Organizational, and Training domain development. Considering that 3/2 BCT went from high intensity conflict training at the National Training Center (NTC) as a heavy legacy unit in October 1999, to a completely transformed Stryker Brigade Combat Team patrolling the streets of Iraq in 2004, one realizes that this was one of the key stage setters for transformation. What might surprise someone removed from the process is that these three domains were developed on location at the tactical level, and pushed higher for incorporation into future operational staff products.

Equally important to consider is that the SBCT provided an interim capability so that the Army could focus on the future. It gave GEN Shinseki the chance to build the “irreversible momentum that we now look to achieve,”¹³ which now allows our highest level Pentagon staffs to focus prioritizing and resourcing the Future Combat Systems’ (FCS) role in the objective force. Complicating the issue is the fact that the Stryker is a vehicle that exists today. It is built by General Dynamics Land Systems (GDLS) and our Soldiers train and fight off of that platform. If you told most Americans that it “is an eight wheeled combat vehicle similar to what the Marines use,” they can visualize it and support its utility. FCS is more about future concepts, capabilities, integration, and interoperability. It is not part of the current structure that our Soldiers even train with. It remains a hazy concept in terms of what it will look like, so gaining support without a prototype requires an inordinate amount of trust and patience.

In order to be on a level playing field, we must agree that FCS is the major modernization platform that GEN Shinseki and then Secretary of the Army Tom White envisioned for the Objective Force. The goal was to set the Army on a path to regain and achieve relevance in the future environment, and for the Army to be able to “project real sustainable combat power anywhere in the world.”¹⁴ The path included what the Army looked like after the Cold War (Current Force); what the capability to bridge the weight and time gaps (Interim Force); and what the future would look like (Objective Force). Concept planners and designers understood that transformation impacted all three forces simultaneously. After all, these planners and designers got their intent from the CSA. During his testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on May 16, 2002, GEN Shinseki provided the following simplistic strategic imperative and guidance:

Transforming The Army involves the management of risk – balancing between today’s readiness to fight and win wars decisively and tomorrow’s need to have the right capabilities in order to be equally ready every day hereafter for the foreseeable future. It requires having a consistent overmatch in capabilities while simultaneously reducing our vulnerabilities to those who would threaten our interests ...

The Objective Force is our main Transformational effort; it is the force of the future and the focus of the Army’s long-term development efforts. It seeks to leverage advances in technology and in organizational innovation to transform land-power capabilities. Better than 90 percent of our science and technology investments are focused on this future Objective Force.¹⁵

GEN Shinseki articulated this simple, clear, and concise guidance, as well as a request for resources above and beyond anything the Army had seen since the end of Operation Desert Storm. Although he unveiled his concept before 9/11, his testimony and other actions continued to press for progress toward the Objective Force during both Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in Iraq. Lesser generals may not have had the courage to continue an expensive – some would argue unaffordable – transformation during mid to high intensity conflict.

When GEN Shinseki was the Director of Training as a Brigadier General, he used to say that “the best way to get ready for war is to go to war.” Although his context was more in line with the value of the Combat Training Centers (CTC) in terms of preparing units with the most realistic conditions possible, there is something to be said for being able to multi-task in any endeavor and under myriad conditions. We continued to “train the force” at Fort Irwin, Fort Polk and Hohenfels, as well as through Fort Leavenworth’s deployable Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) while the Army was at war; so it only made sense that he would continue to

transform the force towards FCS while simultaneously executing the Army's operations and training missions.

Many have written and argued that the Army needs to focus on the Global War on Terrorism and suspend modernization. While that seems to be the approach that would make the most efficient use of today's resources, it doesn't provide for America's security in the future. GEN Shinseki believed, even before the Global War on Terror, that if FCS development were delayed until the middle of next decade the Army would lose its transformational momentum. The risk would be that the Army's platforms would not be ready for the next challenge.

Masterfully, the Army Staff (ARSTAFF) was able to generate early momentum for Transformation. "In the first year of Army Transformation, efforts to win congressional support were successful. Congress added \$3.2 billion (B) to Transformation projects which will (would) support Transformation's initial stages."¹⁶ In his 2002 Statement GEN Shinseki even noted to the SASC that "This committee elected to underwrite Army Transformation at a time when little help was available anywhere, and Transformation was a new and unknown term. Today, when one considers the magnitude of what we have accomplished with your support, it is staggering."¹⁷

Taking on a change of this magnitude certainly will have its critics. The technology challenged cannot stand change because they do not understand the speed at which future technology emerges, and how that technology looks today. They do not trust what they can not see and will be too far behind to influence the technology decision cycle. Sister services see the handwriting on the wall and realize that in the Pentagon battles over budget or end strength, you are either a winner or a loser. An increase to one service usually leads to a decrease for another. Service relevance may not be based on realistic guidance that accounts for future potential geostrategic settings. Traditionalists remain wedded to the systems that "won the last war." For Transformation to be nice and clean, most would prefer a shorter process that fell in line with most modern day business practices. Our armed forces should be realized for what they are – more an insurance policy than what we wish them to be – efficient businesses focused on a return on investment.

Those who do not understand Transformation don't realize that technology developed today, and introduced into modular Brigade Combat Teams, may be some of the same systems used in the FCS MTOE for deployable combat formations. There are several examples of evolving technologies currently in the field, both in deployed and non-deployed units. Perhaps the best example of a potential carry over system is the Joint Network Node (JNN) communications suite. This is a satellite-based system that truly enables the "reach back"

capability to national assets, experts, and data bases that we have been hearing about since the end of Desert Shield and Desert Storm as part of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). Even more astonishing is the fact that the Third Infantry Division and the Fourth Infantry Division were using this technology while the Operational Test Command (OPTEC) and the First Cavalry Division were completing the certification testing on the system. JNN was baptized under fire in Iraq, and was forced to work with legacy communications systems as well as the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency's (DARPA) Command Post of the Future (CPOF). This represents the type of technology that was not fielded as part of the Stryker Brigade Combat Teams, but was clearly in the mind of GEN Shinseki when he stated, "... any time you deploy a force, lots goes with it. And the question is whether or not, with our capabilities to reach back in intel (intelligence) and comms (communications), whether we can begin to shave down that deployment package."¹⁸ Technology developments today, and for the Objective Force, have become symbiotic as some of today's technology wasn't planned to be available until after 2010.

There are other technologies available that are being pressed into service in Iraq and Afghanistan, and once refined will undoubtedly have a line on the Objective Force MTOE. You don't have to look any further than counter Improvised Explosive Device (IED) systems, like WARLOCK. Or at systems that enable greater sensor to shooter links, like the RAVEN family of Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (TUAV's) and Long Range Advance Scout Surveillance System (LRAS3). Taken a step into the future, there are a whole host of Beyond Line of Sight (BLOS) and Non Line of Sight (NLOS) acquisition and engagement systems that are in testing and early production.

In layman's terms, there are systems for the Objective Force today that are waiting for the platforms of the Future Combat System, while being simultaneously incorporated in the Current and Interim Forces.

The last group of detractors are the people who believe that we will be able to win the next war with the forces we used to win the last war. It is unfortunate, but when the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001 occurred, we were not prepared, and we were entering a different kind of warfare than we were used to. Going after enemies who are not nation states is an entirely different proposition than entering conflict with nation states. Fighting an unconventional war with a conventional mindset will ensure long-term failure. The platforms we ask our Soldiers to fight from must now possess the capabilities for asymmetric warfare. Legacy and Interim Forces can have limited successes, but the Objective Force needs to be able to act decisively in

a much more condensed decision cycle, highlighting the need for greater technology, especially in communications, intelligence, and shooter to sensor capabilities.

Those who believe that heavy tanks are the capability required to combat non-state networked cell structure based enemies are off the mark. There may be a certain number of heavy platforms that remain necessary to be able to combat potential adversaries; however, they may not need to be tanks. The weight of our forces have made them harder to deploy quickly, and our friends, allies, and potential enemies realize how long it takes us to build combat power. The United States does not have unlimited resources, and can not afford to preposition heavy brigades world wide. Although David T. Pyne offers that "... if the Army's heavy tanks are retired, then the U.S. will lose the expertise and military capability needed to fight and win one, let alone two major regional conflicts,"¹⁹ it is safe to say that the Army is in the hands of leaders at all levels who have the expertise to incorporate the domains necessary to exploit the new technologies and formations associated with Transformation. The Army is now more experienced in its mid to high intensity skill set than it has been in decades.

There are three major Transformation benefits coming out of the Army's efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The first is the rapid development and fielding of new and Commercial off the Shelf (COTS) technologies that have potential carry over capacity to the Objective Force platforms of the future. The Army's abilities to pass data and information, command and control, and provide broader situational awareness are unmatched in modern warfare. The old paradigm of sending reports higher for consolidation is outdated. Today's connectivity enables near real time information and analysis to be shared down to specific vehicles, and is the beginning of information overmatch. As stated in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 Army Budget Analysis, the Army "is fighting the war, while simultaneously transforming and modernizing the force so that it is also ready and relevant for future challenges across the spectrum of operations."²⁰

The second benefit to Transformation is the realization that the Army is too small for today's missions. Even without clear strategic ends, Presidential and Congressional support for increased end strength should enable the Army to man the combat formations of the Objective Force. The Army may now be able to avoid "shifting positions from its non-combat force to its operational combat force"²¹ without the simultaneous challenges of reducing overall end strength.

There is little doubt that the Army and United States Marine Corps (USMC) have borne the majority of the heavy lifting in Iraq and Afghanistan, but just how much was the correct question. The administration of President George H.W. Bush created the "Peace Dividend,"

and the President William J. Clinton administration continued down a path of cuts aimed at ground forces that were perceived to be unnecessary. During these “sterile combat” periods, the Navy created its power projection “From the Sea” concept while the Air Force hinted at being able to surgically strike targets minimizing the need for troops and increasing the reliance on smart bomb technology. Neither of these attempts were intended as attacks on sister services but were rather a reflection on being able to win the nation’s wars without putting America’s sons and daughters in harms way. Those thoughts were prevalent in service circles before realizing that the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) was looming, and that it required boots on the ground. Lots of boots.

Beyond the temporary 30,000 Soldier increase and initial access to the Army Reserve and National Guard, “the House Armed Services Committee authorized an increase of 30,000 in the Army in last year’s (2006) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).”²² This is not real uniformed growth in the Department of Defense since the Navy and Air Force each lost a fraction to make up the Army’s increase.

In response to readiness and deployability concerns “Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates proposed adding 92,000 troops to the Army and Marine Corps, initiating the biggest increase to U.S. ground forces since the 1960s to shore up a military that top officers warn is on the verge of breaking from prolonged fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan.”²³

The support comes at a critical time for the United States in its war in Iraq, as the President’s new strategy calls for 21,500 more troops in country by the end of May, with little if any expectation that last year’s NDAA or Gates’ 65,000 Soldier proposal will have any benefit for near term operations. Additive forces take time to grow, indoctrinate, incorporate and equip. If our efforts in Iraq have shown us one lesson loud and clear, it is that large organizations take time to transform into effective combat and police forces. If both come to fruition, the payoff will come further down the line in terms of being able to reduce deployment tempos on individuals, and fully manning our Objective Force formations.

The third benefit to Transformation is the corps of young Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers who understand change, and welcome it. Whether they have been in combat or supporting combat operations, they enjoy the challenge of today’s flat world. They have the capability to seek out strategic guidance and move organizations toward relevance, with or without ends, much like GEN Shinseki did. With General Pace’s (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) assessment that “we must organize and arrange our forces to create the agility and flexibility to deal with unknowns and surprises in the coming decades,”²⁴ the Army is succeeding in developing its “pentathletes.”

Since 1940 the Army has demonstrated an ability to undergo massive change while meeting the challenges of the nation. It is the only service that has successfully transformed all of its domains, and not simply reengineered or rightsized portions of them. The Army has changed based on impending crisis as well as lessons learned from other nations' conflicts in order to remain relevant. Considerable resources were required and the trust and confidence of America were maintained.

The Army has gained irreversible momentum in developing and combat testing new technologies, acquiring budget and end strength resources, growing adaptive leaders and living in a constant state of change.

Into the Future

Much to GEN Shinseki's credit, the Army's Transformation is creating irreversible momentum in educating governmental decision makers about the processes and costs associated with managing change. With any luck, it will come before the nation and the Army learn the cost of not evolving. OSD needs to become more supportive by providing strategic vision and realizing that we do not have the luxury of being prepared for the last war.

Thankfully, the Army is successfully progressing with Transformation at an unprecedented pace. The Global War on Terrorism will continue to be a long war that will challenge the Army to think unconventionally while employing conventional platforms. Both Transformation and GWOT will provide experience for our Soldiers and leaders as well as insight and direction into shaping the platforms for the Objective Force. Our ability to grasp these two events will enable the Army in leveraging interoperability, enhancing lethality, and ensuring that all services are relevant and ready for the future. While the Transformation War is ugly, winning it is now non-negotiable.

Endnotes

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